

carrier on the east coast of the United States, and all of them are home-ported in one place. That is not the defense posture the United States should be in.

It is another thing to talk about the parochial interests, which I represent, of Jacksonville and Florida. That is certainly an economic hit because Jacksonville, even if they get a nuclear carrier—and by the way, 5 to 7 years down the road it is another administration and another Congress to make those decisions—but in the meantime, Jacksonville doesn't have a carrier for 5 to 7 years, with the economic hit that takes place and the Nation doesn't have its carrier assets spread on the Atlantic coast of this country. That is not a position we should have.

I am going to offer a compromise, since it seems that the Pentagon is absolutely intent on scrapping—they call it mothballing—this carrier. The compromise I am suggesting, and I talked to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs just moments ago, is since the Navy and the Pentagon have decided they are not going to rehab the *John F. Kennedy* in a dry dock and save that expense, but the *Kennedy* can remain operational for the next 3 to 4 to 5 years without being rehabbed in dry dock, let us keep our assets dispersed on the east coast until these decisions are made and the facilities are changed so we can spread our nuclear carrier assets.

That does another thing for the defense policy of this country. There is a question coming up in 2008, when the conventionally powered aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* is scheduled to be decommissioned. She is now home-ported in Japan because Japan, the Japanese Government, has had a policy of not accepting a nuclear carrier. What happens if by 2008 the Japanese Government does not change the policy and will not receive a nuclear carrier? Then we ought to have the *John F. Kennedy* kept alive in an operational status where it can fill that role and, over the course of the next 3 years coming up to 2008—and we are in 2005 right now—we will know the status.

From the standpoint of defense policy, No. 1, of spreading our carrier assets, the compromise I am offering makes sense. No. 2, from the standpoint of being able to respond quickly if we needed another conventionally powered carrier in Japan, we would have a backup conventional carrier in 2008 if the Japanese Government would not receive a nuclear carrier. And, No. 3, it would not disrupt the lives of all those Jacksonville families by suddenly abolishing one of our carriers and all of the 5,000 sailors and their families and perhaps other ships in the carrier battle group that would go away. It seems to me it is the prudent defense policy thing to do.

I know if I offer this, if it is not being considered in the Pentagon, that I am swimming upstream. But I think it is worth the fight, not only as a Senator

representing Florida but as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee; it is a matter of protection, of the defense interests of this country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized to speak for up to 10 minutes, but then following my remarks that the Senator from Tennessee be recognized for any remarks he might have, and following the conclusion of his remarks that I might then be recognized at that time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### HONORING POPE JOHN PAUL II

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today we mourn the passing of a great man. In the long history of Roman Catholic Popes, John Paul II is among the greatest in championing human dignity. He also was a champion for the sanctity of human life and for the family and for working for the good of his Church. He is the kind of leader who only comes along once in a very great long time.

As the most traveled pontiff of all time, Pope John Paul personally delivered hope, encouragement, and inspiration to more people in more places than any other person in human history. And he was especially beloved by the youth, the future of our world, with whom he had a very special relationship.

Catholics and non-Catholics alike should feel fortunate to have had such a leader in our midst, a man who gave so much to humanity.

Undeterred, perhaps even driven a bit harder by an assassin's bullets, this devout man embarked on an exhausting journey over a quarter of a century to spread words of freedom, compassion, and justice. His mission seems to have been nothing less than redemption of the world. Surely, but for men such as this, the world would have long fallen into irreparable chaos and decline.

Elected Bishop of Rome on October 16, 1978, Pope John Paul II's faith and courage was forged and proven as a Polish priest standing up to the horrors of the Soviet Union. He took his stance at a time when dissidents were whisked away in the dark, never to be heard from again. Yet John Paul's perseverance eventually awakened the soul of a nation of secret believers who stood in candlelit solidarity to bring down an evil empire.

According to Harvard theologian George Williams, a Protestant who be-

friend the Pope many years ago, he is an imposing man in physique, big in intellectual vision, who deeply enjoys people. In a most remarkable way, he is a man whose soul is at leisure with himself.

Only two Popes have served longer and none with more sustained vigor, clarity, or cheerfulness. Even after his step faltered and his voice began to waiver, he bore his infirmities with honor and humor. Although his body was failing, his indomitable spirit continued to touch the world and teach us about the strength and promise of the human heart.

This great Pope was loved by people of various religions and across ideological spectrums. Even many who disagreed with him respected his grand vision and his convictions. Having captured the world's attention and admiration by standing for our better angels for so long, Pope John Paul II will surely stand with President Ronald Reagan as one of the giants of our time.

Both men understood deeply where the hope of mankind lay—in faith, in courage, in liberty. On October 11, 2001, 1 month after the devastating terrorist attacks of 9/11, John Paul offered this prayer:

O God almighty and merciful, he who sows discord cannot understand You. He who loves violence cannot welcome You. Watch over us in our painful condition, tried by the brutal acts of terrorism and death. Comfort Your children and open our hearts to hope that in our time, we again may know serenity and peace.

I can only add my own amen to that prayer.

I yield the floor to Senator ALEXANDER under the terms of the previous order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Texas. I join with him in his thoughts about Pope John Paul II and the thoughts of our other colleagues that have been expressed. He was a man of sincerity and great character. He traveled more than any other Pope. He traveled the United States more than any other Pope. He carried a message of peace. He carried a message of charity. He had a profound impact on the world and his native country of Poland. It can fairly be said that Poland would not have overthrown communism, at least not when it did, had it not been for Pope John Paul.

I remember in 1987, our family had lived in Australia for 6 months, three teenagers and a 7-year-old, and we came home from around the world in a little different way. We took a train from Moscow to Paris. This was before the Berlin Wall came down. All of us, our different ages in our family, remember how in Poland the churches were open and vibrant, they were active, and people were there. In Russia, they were museums. We thought about that. We think about that today as we